

Blouberg Municipality



CHAPTER 28: STAFF MEMBER WELLNESS PROGRAMME POLICY

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1. PREAMBLE

The Blouberg Local Municipality acknowledges existence of staff members' personal and work-related problems that may have a negative influence on work performance. As a result, it recognises its responsibility through the establishment of the Staff member Wellness Programme (EWP) aimed at enhancing performance and quality of work life of all staff members. The EWP works closely with other wellness policies such as HIV/AIDS, Harassment, Occupational Health and Safety, and Intoxicating Substances Abuse.

2. PURPOSE

To provide guidance and a standard framework of establishing and managing a Staff member Wellness Programme.

3. SCOPE OF APPLICATION

This policy applies to all staff members of the Municipality.

4. LEGISLATIVE AND POLICY FRAMEWORK

- Constitution of the Republic of South Africa Act, 1996 (Act No. 108 of 1996)
- Municipal Systems Act, 2000 (Act No. 32 of 2000)
- Municipal Structures Act, 1998 (Act No. 117 of 1998)
- Municipal Finance Management Act, 2003 (Act No. 56 of 2003)
- Labour Relations Act, 1995 (Act No. 66 of 1995)
- Employment Equity, 1998 (Act No. 55 of 1998)
- Basic Conditions of Employment Act, 1997 (Act No. 75 of 1997)
- Skills Development Act, (Act No. 97 of 1998)

- South African Local Government Bargaining Council: Collective Agreements
- Occupational Health and Safety Act, 1993 (Act No. 85 of 1993)
- Compensation for Occupational Injuries and Diseases Act, 1993 (Act No. 130 of 1993)
- Medical Schemes Act, 1998 (Act No. 131 of 1998)
- EAPA-SA Standards of 2002
- Mental Health Care Act, 2002 (Act No. 17 of 2002)

5. DEFINITIONS

All terminology used in this policy shall bear the same meaning as in the Regulations or applicable legislation, or as defined and / or explained in the Glossary of Terminology in the Human Resources Policies Manual.

6. PROBLEM STATEMENT

Offering wellness programmes to municipal staff on various aspects that affects their well being is at the core of reflecting that the employer cares about its human capital

7. POLICY PROVISIONS

7.1 Interventions and timing

7.1.1 There shall be a balance between reactive interventions, proactive interventions and development of staff members. Intervention shall be done at three levels, namely:

- (a) Primary intervention, focusing on prevention, health promotion, education and risk assessment.
- (b) Secondary intervention, focusing on early identification and management and / or resolution of problems or concerns.
- (c) Tertiary intervention, focusing on treatment, rehabilitation, care and support of staff members experiencing personal or work-related problems.

7.1.2 Efforts shall be made to ensure early identification and treatment of staff member problems. Managers shall be involved to ensure timely problem identification, referral and assessment.

7.2 Confidentiality

7.2.1 Any information shared during consultation or counselling shall not be disclosed to anyone, including management, without the staff member's written consent except when disclosure is required in terms of a law or court order.

7.2.2 The information provided by the staff member during consultation shall not be utilised for any purpose other than those agreed upon between the counsellor and the staff member.

7.2.3 All staff member records in this regard shall be kept strictly confidential and not in the staff members' personnel files or any official record of the Municipality.

7.3 Eligibility and accessibility

The EWP shall be accessible and available to all staff members irrespective of position or level in the Municipality, and their immediate family members where appropriate in the opinion of the counsellor.

7.4 Neutrality

The EWP shall not be frustrated in the traditional interface between management and staff members; and shall not clash with existing administrative procedures. For instance, EWP is not a replacement of the disciplinary procedure.

7.5 Impartiality

Participation in the programme shall not jeopardise the staff member's job security or chances for promotion or other related benefits.

7.6 Equal treatment

Staff members who use EWP services shall receive the same considerations as those with medical problems. No staff member shall receive preferential or adverse treatment due to his / her participation in the programme.

7.7 Voluntarism

Participation in the programme shall be voluntary. However, management shall have the prerogative to recommend assistance for seemingly troubled staff members. Refusal by a staff member recommended for assistance due to poor performance could result in disciplinary action when poor performance persists.

7.8 Prevention of abuse

The programme shall be used solely for its purpose, and not as a pretext to engage in activities aimed at unfairly treating the staff member or abusing the generosity of the Municipality.

7.9 EWP services and method of provision

The Municipality shall, on the discretion of the Municipal Manager in consultation with the HRM Unit, provide all or part of the EWP services utilising internal staff of the Municipality, or opt to outsource the provision of the EWP services in part, or as a whole, covering the following:

7.9.1 Full service for staff members and their household (namely the spouse, children and other persons financially dependent on the staff member), and focussing on childcare, elder care, education and social benefits.

7.9.2 Training of supervisors and managers and equipping them with the skill to identify negative job performance issues related to either work or personal life, and the knowledge to refer them to relevant wellness practitioner.

7.9.3 A direct, multilingual, confidential, unlimited access and 24 hour, 7 days a week clinical and life management services through professional, qualified, registered clinicians and specialists through a 24-hour toll-free number.

7.9.4 Provision of wellness clinic services on agreed-upon basis.

7.9.5 A 48 to 72 hours response turnaround to offer individual and group trauma debriefing for critical incidents.

7.9.6 A legal wellbeing service to assist staff members with consumer affairs, social benefits and legal matters.

7.9.7 A financial wellbeing service focussing mainly on financial literacy and debt management while maintaining sound mental and social health.

7.9.8 Managed sessions, creating awareness and education about the EWP service, as an introduction to staff members, and promotion of EWP at various work sites through staff member forums.

7.9.9 Development and implementation of a health calendar, with wellness days and events incorporated into it.

7.9.10 Development of a comprehensive EWP and its successful implementation, supported by ongoing marketing and periodic reporting to management of the Municipality.

7.9.11 Advice on recreational and sporting activities, incorporating physical fitness, and on work gyms, if required.

7.9.12 Support to staff members battling substance abuse through support groups.

- 7.9.13** Provision of consultancy service to manage absenteeism, incapacity, and proactive alerting of observed risks / threats following professional staff member assessments.
- 7.9.14** Continuous assessment and analysis of statistical data, and ongoing feedback on trends, as well as communication of all developments, issues, concerns, compliments and other information to the Municipality.
- 7.9.15** Facilitation of annual voluntary counselling and testing (VCT) campaigns for HIV/AIDS, as well as referrals, peer educator support and training.
- 7.9.16** Annual review report to provide an overall review of the service utilisation data and to discuss organisational trends.
- 7.9.17** Facilitation of Council-approved involvement of the Municipality's management and staff members upon death of fellow staff member and / or Councillor, through measures not limited to:
- (a)** Arrangement of workplace memorial service, where applicable;
 - (b)** Participation in bereaved family memorials, where applicable;
 - (c)** Arrangement of Municipal transport for staff members and Councillors to attend funeral, where applicable;
 - (d)** Offering of condolences on behalf of the Municipality; and
 - (e)** Provision of counselling services to bereaved family, where required.

7.10 Institutional arrangements

- 7.10.1** The Municipal Manager shall ensure that EWP is a key performance area of all managers and shall furthermore appoint the HRM Unit as the nodal point for managing EWP across the Municipality.
- 7.10.2** HRM Unit shall, from time to time and on case-by-case experience, provide guidelines to both line managers and appointed EWP professionals on referral procedures for each type of case requiring assistance.
- 7.10.3** HRM Unit shall, in consultation with the CFO, ensure there are financial resources for the implementation of EWP across the Municipality.
- 7.10.4** HRM Unit shall, from time to time, advise line managers and staff members on the integration of the EWP with other Municipality programmes.

7.11 Roles and responsibilities

7.11.1 The Municipal Manager or his / her delegated assignee(s) accept overall responsibility for the implementation and monitoring of the policy.

7.11.2 The financial implications related to implementing this policy shall be qualified and quantified by Human Resource Management in consultation with the Chief Financial Officer.

8. POLICY MONITORING AND EVALUATION

8.1 This policy shall be implemented and effective once recommended by the Local Labour Forum and approved by Council.

8.2 Non-compliance to the stipulations contained in this policy shall be regarded as breach of Code of Conduct, which shall be dealt with in terms of the Code of Conduct.

8.3 Head of Corporate Services shall carry out the monitoring and evaluation of the policy's implementation.

9. POLICY APPROVAL

This policy was formulated by HR Management in consultation with the Local Labour Forum.

Authorised by Municipal Manager:

Signature:

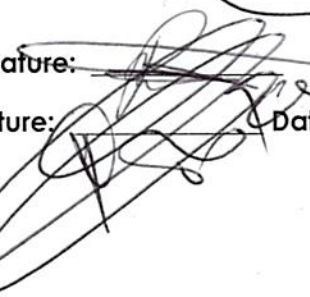


Date: 30/07/2024

Recommended by Portfolio Committee

on Corporate Services:

Signature:



Date: 30/07/2024

Approved by Municipal Council:

Signature:

Date: 30/07/2024